

The Women's Molokai through a Woman's Eyes

By Jeanne Dean

So as not to miss a minute of this historic race I flew over to Molokai the day before. I found that there was a common theme among all the women paddlers I spoke with, and it wasn't winning. Instead, they were charged up over being able to compete in what was until now a challenge only men could aspire to. They spoke lovingly of womens' Leinani Faria, who campaigned long and hard for this womens' race, and to whom the race was dedicated. After the moving blessing the morning of the race, leis were dropped from the departing canoes in her honor. Also honored was our very own Auntie Eva Pomroy, Outrigger's guardian angel, and an integral part of our canoe program.

It was a beautiful, hot, tradewind day and everyone remarked how calm the channel was, in spite of some very large swells. The Outrigger women took the lead early, paddling an almost consistent 52 strokes a minute—their crew changes almost textbook perfect. It was a performance of a very highly motivated and extremely well coached team—champion sailer mothers, flight attendant, model, a team of women from many walks of life, but all good athletes.

The rest is history and another Outrigger victory.